Zeitschrift:	L'Enseignement Mathématique
Herausgeber:	Commission Internationale de l'Enseignement Mathématique
Band:	48 (2002)
Heft:	3-4: L'ENSEIGNEMENT MATHÉMATIQUE
Artikel:	ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN PIECEWISE LINEAR AND DIFFERENTIABLE MANIFOLDS IN DIMENSION EIGHT AND AUTOMORPHISMS OF \$\sharp_{i=1}^b (S^2 \times S^5)\$
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Kapitel:	5. Structure of the group \$Aut_0^{PL}(\sharp_{i=1}^b (S^2 \times S^5))/Aut_0^{PL}(\sharp_{i=1}^b (S^2 \times D^6))\$
DOI:	https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-66077

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In other words, a manifold X with $\delta_X \equiv 0$ is piecewise linearly (smoothly) isomorphic $X^{\dagger} \# X^*$ where X^* is the type of X and $b_4(X^{\dagger}) = 0$. As our surgery arguments above reveal, an isomorphism between $X^{\dagger} \# X^*$ and $X'^{\dagger} \# X'^*$ can be chosen of the form $\varphi^{\dagger} \# \varphi^*$ where $\varphi^{\dagger} \colon X^{\dagger} \longrightarrow X'^{\dagger}$ and $\varphi^* \colon X^* \longrightarrow X'^*$ are isomorphisms. Therefore, the set of isomorphy classes of based piecewise linear E-manifolds of type X^* with $b_2 = b$ is in bijection to the set of isomorphy classes of based piecewise linear E-manifolds with $b_2 = b$ and $b_4 = 0$. The same goes for differentiable manifolds of type X^* , if X^* is not diffeomorphic to $X^* \# \Sigma$, Σ an exotic 8-sphere. Otherwise, we have to divide by the action of ϑ^8 . This observation together with Corollary 4.9 settles Theorem 2.4.

5. Structure of the group $\operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times S^{5})) / \operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times D^{6}))$

In this section we prove that $\operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times S^{5})) / \operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times D^{6}))$ is an abelian group which is, moreover, isomorphic to the group FL_{b} defined before. This result should be of some independent interest, especially because the group FL_{b} is quite well understood by Haefliger's work. For b = 1, we refer to [20] for more specific information.

We begin with the elementary

LEMMA 5.1. Let $k \in \operatorname{Aut}_0^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times S^5))$ be a commutator. Then k extends to an automorphism of $\#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times D^6)$.

Proof. For the proof, we depict $\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times S^{5})$ as follows: Let V_{i} , i = 1, ..., b, be *b* copies of $S^{2} \times D^{6}$, and we join V_{i} and V_{i+1} by a tube $T_{i} \cong [-1,1] \times D^{7}$, i = 1, ..., b-1. The result is a manifold *W* whose boundary is isomorphic to $\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times S^{5})$. We make the following normalizations: Write ∂V_{i} as $(S^{2} \times D_{+}^{i}) \cup (S^{2} \times D_{-}^{i})$, let n_{i} and s_{i} be the centers of D_{+}^{i} and D_{-}^{i} , respectively, and set $S_{+}^{i} := S^{2} \times n_{i}$ and $S_{-}^{i} := S^{2} \times s_{i}$, i = 1, ..., b. Choose furthermore points $e_{i} \neq w_{i}$ in $(S^{2} \times D_{+}^{i}) \cap (S^{2} \times D_{-}^{i})$, i = 1, ..., b, and suppose that $\{-1\} \times D^{7} \subset T_{i}$ is attached to a disc around w_{i} in ∂V_{i} and $\{1\} \times D^{7} \subset T_{i}$ to a disc around e_{i+1} in ∂V_{i+1} , i = 1, ..., b - 1. Set $T := \bigsqcup_{i=1}^{b-1} T_{i}$.

Now, let $k = f \circ g \circ f^{-1} \circ g^{-1}$ with $f, g \in \operatorname{Aut}_0^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times S^5))$. As $H_2(h, \mathbb{Z})$ is the identity for every element $h \in \operatorname{Aut}_0^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times S^5))$ and S^i_{\pm} , $i = 1, \ldots, b$, both represent the same basis for $H_2(\partial W, \mathbb{Z})$, h is isotopic to a map h' which satisfies either assumption (A) or (B) below.

- (A): h' is trivial on a tubular neighborhood of S^i_+ which contains $(S^2 \times D^i_+) \setminus \text{Int}(T), i = 1, ..., b$.
- (B): h' is trivial on a tubular neighborhood of S^i_{-} which contains $(S^2 \times D^i_{-}) \setminus \text{Int}(T), i = 1, ..., b$.

Next, replace f by an isotopic map f' satisfying (A), and g by an isotopic map g' satisfying (B). Then k' is isotopic to $f' \circ g' \circ f'^{-1} \circ g'^{-1}$. The map k' is the identity outside $\operatorname{Int}(\partial T)$. It is, furthermore, the identity on a collar of $(\{-1\} \sqcup \{1\}) \times S^6$ in $R_i := [-1,1] \times S^6 \subset \partial T_i$, $i = 1, \ldots, b - 1$. Let k'_i be the restriction of k' to R_i , $i = 1, \ldots, b$. We know that each k'_i is the identity on a collar of $\{-1,1\} \times S^6$ in R_i . Thus, we extend every k'_i to a PL automorphism \tilde{k}_i of $D^7 \times \{-1\} \cup R_i \cup D^7 \times \{1\} \cong S^7$ through $\operatorname{id}_{D^7 \times \{-1\} \cup D^7 \times \{1\}}$. Now, by [27], Lemma 1.10, p. 8, \tilde{k}_i extends to an automorphism κ_i of $D^8 \cong D^7 \times [-1,1]$, $i = 1, \ldots, b$. Thus, the maps id_{V_i} and α_i , $i = 1, \ldots, b$, glue to an automorphism of $\#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times D^6)$ whose restriction to the boundary is just k'. \Box

This lemma shows that $\operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times D^{6}))$ is a normal subgroup of $\operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times S^{5}))$, and that $\operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times S^{5})) / \operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times D^{6}))$ is abelian. Moreover, in Section 4.3, we have already defined a set theoretic bijection

$$\beta: \operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times S^{5})) / \operatorname{Aut}_{0}^{\operatorname{PL}}(\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^{2} \times D^{6})) \longrightarrow \operatorname{FL}_{b}$$

THEOREM 5.2. The map β is a group isomorphism.

Proof. Since β is bijective, we have to verify that β is a homomorphism. In order to do so, we will construct a group **G** together with surjective homomorphisms

$$\chi_1: \mathbf{G} \longrightarrow \operatorname{Aut}_0^{\operatorname{PL}} \left(\#_{i=1}^b (S^2 \times S^5) \right) / \operatorname{Aut}_0^{\operatorname{PL}} \left(\#_{i=1}^b (S^2 \times D^6) \right)$$

and

$$\chi_2\colon \mathbf{G}\longrightarrow \mathrm{FL}_b$$
,

such that $\chi_2 = \beta \circ \chi_1$. This will clearly settle the claim.

Before we define **G**, we recall some constructions and conventions from [11]. Let $S^8 = \{(x_0, \ldots, x_9) \in \mathbb{R}^9 \mid x_0^2 + \cdots + x_9^2 = 1\}$ be the unit sphere, write $S^8 = D_+^8 \cup D_-^8$, and let $\sigma: S^8 \longrightarrow S^8$ be the reflection at $S^7 = D_+^8 \cap D_-^8$, interchanging the Northern and the Southern hemispheres. First, let $S_b := (S_1^5, \ldots, S_b^5)$ be a 'standard link' in S^8 defined as follows: Fix real numbers $-1/2 < a_1 < \cdots < a_b < 1/2$, and set

$$S_i^5 := \{ (x_0, \ldots, x_9) \in S^8 \mid x_6 = x_7 = x_8 = 0, x_9 = a_i \}.$$

We choose, furthermore, framings $\tau_i: S_i^5 \times D^3 \longrightarrow S^8$ which extend over D^6 , such that $\tau_i(D_{i,\pm}^5 \times D^3) \subset D_{\pm}^8$ and $\sigma \circ \tau_i = \tau_i \circ (\sigma|_{S_i^5} \times \mathrm{id}_{D^3}), i = 1, \ldots, b$. Let l_b^0 be the resulting framed link in S^8 with $l_{b,\pm}^0 := l_b^0 \cap D_{\pm}^8$. Recall from Section 1 of [11] that

- 1. Every framed link l of b five-dimensional spheres in S^8 is isotopic to a link l', such that either (A) $l' \cap D^8_+ = l^0_{b,+}$ or (B) $l' \cap D^8_- = l^0_{b,-}$.
- 2. If l_1 satisfies (A) and l_2 satisfies (B), then $l_1 + l_2$ is represented by the link l with $l \cap D^8_+ = l_2 \cap D^8_+$ and $l \cap D^8_- = l_1 \cap D^8_-$.

Note that, if we perform surgery along l_b^0 , we get a manifold $W = W_+ \cup W_$ which is isomorphic to $\#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times S^6)$, and

$$W_{\pm} := \left(D_{\pm}^8 \setminus \operatorname{Int}(l_b^0)\right) \cup \left(\bigsqcup_{i=1}^b (S_i^2 \times D_{\pm}^6)\right)$$

is canonically isomorphic to $\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^2 \times D^6)$. For the rest of the proof, we will use the description of $\#_{i=1}^{b}(S^2 \times S^5)$ as $\partial W_+ = \partial W_-$. Set

 $\mathbf{G} := \left\{ \text{PL-maps } f \colon S^7 \setminus \text{Int}(l_b^0) \longrightarrow S^7 \setminus \text{Int}(l_b^0) \colon f|_{\text{boundary}} = \text{id} \right\}.$ For every $f \in \mathbf{G}$, we define $\varphi(f) \colon \#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times S^5) \longrightarrow \#_{i=1}^b(S^2 \times S^5)$, by extending f through the identity on $\bigsqcup_{i=1}^b(S_i^2 \times D^5)$. Similarly, define $\psi(f) \colon S^7 \longrightarrow S^7$. Obviously,

$$\chi_1 \colon \mathbf{G} \longrightarrow \operatorname{Aut}_0^{\operatorname{PL}} \left(\#_{i=1}^b (S^2 \times S^5) \right) / \operatorname{Aut}_0^{\operatorname{PL}} \left(\#_{i=1}^b (S^2 \times D^6) \right)$$
$$f \longmapsto \left[\varphi(f) \right]$$

is a surjective homomorphism.

Next, we associate to $f \in \mathbf{G}$ an element $\chi_2(f) \in \mathrm{FL}_b$ as follows: First, we define $\Sigma(f) := D^8_+ \cup_{\psi(f)} D^8_-$ and the link $l'(f) := l^0_{b,+} \cup_{\psi(f)} l^0_{b,-}$. Then we choose a piecewise linear homeomorphism $F \colon \Sigma(f) \longrightarrow S^8$ and set $l_F(f) := F(l'(f))$. We have checked before that the isotopy class of $l_F(f)$ does not depend on the chosen homeomorphism, so that $\chi_2(f) := [l_F(f)] \in \mathrm{FL}_b$ is well defined. To see that $\chi_2 \colon \mathbf{G} \longrightarrow \mathrm{FL}_b$ is a homomorphism, let f, f' be in \mathbf{G} . Choose extensions $\overline{\psi} \colon D^8_+ \longrightarrow D^8_+$ and $\overline{\psi}' \colon D^8_- \longrightarrow D^8_-$ of $\psi(f)$ and $\psi(f')$, respectively. We then define $F \colon \Sigma(f) \longrightarrow S^8$ as $\overline{\psi}$ on D^8_+ and as the identity on D^8_- , $F' \colon \Sigma(f) \longrightarrow S^8$ as $\overline{\psi}$ on D^8_+ and $(\overline{\psi}')^{-1}$ on D^8_- , and $F'' \colon \Sigma(f' \circ f) \longrightarrow S^8$ as $\overline{\psi}$ on D^8_+ and $(\overline{\psi}')^{-1}$ on D^8_- . Then the link $l_F(f)$ satisfies (B), the link $l_{F'}(f')$ satisfies (A), and (2) above shows that $[l_{F''}(f' \circ f)] = [l_{F'}(f')] + [l_F(f)]$.

Finally, for given $f \in \mathbf{G}$, we can perform surgery on $\Sigma(f)$ along l'(f). The result is $W_+ \cup_{\varphi(f)} W_-$. Reading this backwards means nothing else but $\beta(\chi_1(f)) = \chi_2(f)$ and we are done. \square